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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## CLOSING REMARKS

### African Leadership for Child Survival- A Promise Renewed

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It is an honor for me to present closing remarks on behalf of the United States Government and the American people.

Over three intense days we have seen how countries who have committed to reducing child mortality face great challenges and achieve progress by using proven cost-effective and high impact interventions, building health care delivery systems, working directly with and on the community level, investing in the education of girls and women, and by forging political will and determination. These improvements in maternal, infant, and child health are critical for overall development of nations.

For many years, USAID has championed the cause of child survival and is proud to partner with UNICEF in supporting governments and nongovernmental organizations in many countries of Africa to enable them to achieve their goals.

Here in Ethiopia USAID is very proud to support and assist the Ministry of Health's workforce and the extension workers at health centers and health posts in the most populous regions of the country; we are working with Ethiopia to build human resources for health and sustainable health systems, to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and to assist children affected by HIV/AIDS, to promote reproductive health, and above all, family health. And in Ethiopia while we celebrate great gains in child survival, we also join the Ministry of Health and all donor partners and nongovernmental organizations in tackling the greatest challenge of reducing maternal and newborn deaths.

In Ethiopia and around Africa USAID is pleased to serve as a convener of public and private partners, of scientists and health workers, of international and local organizations to achieve

the goals of A Promise Renewed for Child Survival: to end preventable newborn and child deaths, and to promote the health and education of mothers so they can nurture their children.

For the country action plans that you have developed and the scorecards, I reiterate the statements of USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah and his representative here USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator for Global Health Wade Warren at the opening plenary: USAID stands with you and will support your efforts to make preventable deaths an issue of the past.

The call to action is also about working together and I believe that is why this meeting of African countries coming together on child survival is so important. No country is tackling this problem alone, we are here to support each other, learn from each other, and action is required by all stakeholders.

Finally, I would like to congratulate again and express my appreciation to the Government of Ethiopia and to Minister Tedros and Minister Kesete for their strong leadership and their commitment to child survival. This meeting would not have been possible without their initiative and leadership. I want to thank all the organizers of this meeting from the Ministry of Health, UNICEF, and USAID.

To the delegates and experts here, many from countries where I have served, I applaud all of you for your enormous dedication to improve the lives of many thousands of children and their families. You are the champions of child survival; your experience, your innovations, and your knowledge transcends borders. As US Ambassador Booth noted in his remarks at the Welcome Reception: “the health and security of your children benefits all our children...it is not only a moral obligation, it is how governments can better protect the welfare of all their citizens”. In other words, child survival contributes to stability and to economic development; it is good governance.

Finally, It is in working together, holding each other accountable to our pledges, sharing knowledge and experience, that will allow many more children and their families to celebrate their fifth birthday—and many more after that.

I wish you all success and perseverance in the year ahead and I look forward to hearing of measurable progress at the global follow-up Call to Action--Promise Renewed meeting to take place in 2014.

Children *are* the promise of the future and so *we* must keep the promise and invest in all children, everywhere. It’s in our best interest for prosperity and for peace in years to come. I close quoting from Dr. Kesete’s Opening Plenary address: “We simply cannot claim to have a strong nation if we do not reach our children with basic health services.”

Thank you.